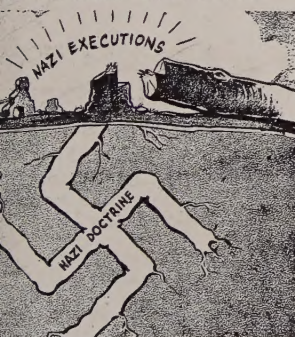
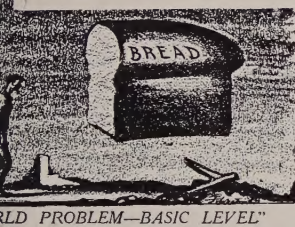




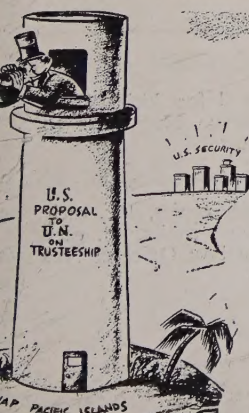
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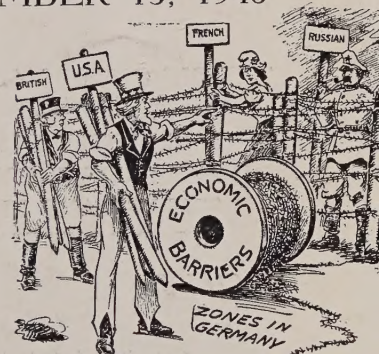
DECEMBER 15, 1946



"DEEP ARE THE ROOTS"



MISS LIBERTY (?)



"LET'S TEAR THEM DOWN"



"SALVAGE JOB"

USA — UN — USSR

The Big Powers and the United Nations

By HANS SIMONS

# SOCIAL ACTION Magazine

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\*Kenneth Underwood has been awarded a Sterling Research Fellowship by Yale University for the academic year 1946-47. He has been granted a leave of absence from the magazine, during which time his wife, Marjorie Underwood, will perform the duties of managing editor.—L. P.

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## SOCIAL ACTION, VOL. XII. NUMBER 10, DECEMBER 15, 1946

Published monthly, except July and August, by the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y. Frederick M. Meek, Chairman; Ray Gibbons, Director.

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Subscription \$1.00 per year; Canada, \$1.10 per year. Single copies, 15c. each; 2 to 9, 12c. each; 10 to 49 copies, 10c. each; 50 or more copies, 8c. each. Re-entered as second-class matter January 30, 1939, at the Post Office at New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879.



# The Big Powers and the United Nations

## The United States and the United Nations

The United States is host to the United Nations. This is a fact of symbolic significance, whatever the merits of the United Nations Charter or the achievements of the United Nations Assembly. What a road this country traveled from repudiating the League of Nations to initiating and welcoming this new organization!

Since the United Nations acts under our very eyes, what it does or fails to do will have profound influence on public opinion in this country. Conversely, how we are prepared for this experiment in peace, and how we receive it, cannot but impress the men and women who participate in it under the American climate. Therefore the present relations between the

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—Ralph Crane,  
from *Black Star*

United States and the United Nations, and the environment of political and social forces in the contemporary scene, are so significant that they deserve serious consideration. A better understanding of what the United Nations is as an instrument of international policy and national security, and how the United States can use it, ought to help us beware of both exaggerated hopes and premature disappointment.

### *Wave of Disillusionment*

Again as after the first World War, we are passing through a period of severe disillusionment. So deep is the disappointment that our individual and social equilibrium is in danger.

There is nothing strange about the change which came with the end of the war, though most people were surprised by it. The results are so disturbing mainly because they accumulate on every level of political and social life.

We are disappointed and frustrated as individuals. The war gave a sense of participation even to those who behaved entirely selfishly. Slight inconveniences could be enlarged into vicarious suffering or real sacrifice. Personal opinions were channelled into common effort which showed itself everywhere, from factories and farms at home to the combat areas and conference tables abroad. In many ways everybody's life and work were related directly to the fight against Germany and Japan.

But with victory won, the claims on the citizens ceased to command respect. Sacrifices still demanded became an imposition rather than a privilege. The removal of governmental controls was like an invitation to lift all self-control. Too many of us had relied too heavily on the steadying influence of a President who in the role of father helped to make rules and regulations to sustain us in an effort to cooperate. Under the protective cover of accepted leadership and enforced unity, we did not develop the moral resources which we now need. Our greatest disappointment therefore and the most dangerous one is in ourselves.



### *Lack of Confidence*

This loss of self-confidence is reflected in our attitude toward everything in which we play a part. The United States cannot be more successful in its international tasks than its citizens are in understanding and using their opportunities. This is particularly true of our role in the United Nations. We can make the best of it only if we accept it with equanimity rather than with artificially stimulated emotions.

This, however, we cannot do as long as we concentrate on other people's failures — our government's, foreign governments', other nations'. There is indeed ample ground for criticizing our government. By abruptly ending Lend-Lease it eliminated the material, moral and emotional benefits which grew from the voluntary sharing of our wealth. By recklessly discontinuing domestic controls it encouraged selfishness and greed, and opened the flood gates to all the disruptive forces now at work within our society. By an ineptitude no longer hidden behind the smoke of battle or the screen of censorship, the local and national authorities damaged our justified pride as citizens, and increased our traditional zest for griping. Being disappointed, we are irritable and unproductive.

### *International Repercussions*

Our domestic failures have fostered misinterpretation of our foreign policy, because there seems to be very little relation between our policies at home and our international program. Who will expect consistency from a country as hopelessly inconsistent as we are in managing our domestic affairs? Who will presume magnanimity in a nation where most individuals try to charge what the traffic can bear? Who will expect insistence on principle from people who made temporary shortages, mostly brought about by mercenary motives, the major issue of an election where so much more was at stake than material comfort?

If we wanted to judge others as we judge ourselves, we could

tell a similar story of contradictions about Great Britain, and of similar selfishness in Russia and China. But if in the latter two cases there is less extenuation in good deeds, there is also more excuse because of the sufferings of these countries.

### *We Have Our Good Points*

American inconsistencies are only part of the picture, though the one which the rest of the world notices more easily and more eagerly. It is also true that a great many Americans are doing much to help others in need, and that through numerous groups, agencies and organizations, especially of the churches, they are contributing to world-wide relief.

It seems shocking that one should have to ask for a still more magnanimous American foreign policy when nobody can deny that the United States is neither nationalistic nor narrow-minded. The record of our share in UNRRA, of our role in promoting other international agencies, and of our general attitude in Germany and Japan is really much too good to justify the sweeping denunciations one hears here and abroad. Our support of democratic processes is consistent both as an expression of our preferences and as an answer to totalitarianism. But somehow we lose patience too quickly and stop our efforts short of the point where exertion becomes sufficient or sacrifice is still safe. This is the essence of our failure, and the primary weakness of our position in the United Nations.

### *Disappointment at the United Nations*

Few people took very seriously the wartime promise of a better world, especially since it was made mainly in advertisements by big business and was concerned exclusively with the prospects of more physical comfort. But most people believed that *a more peaceful world* could be guaranteed by the United Nations. Obviously this hope was partly due to the fact that the new international organization had been over-sold, particularly to the American public. To this extent disappointment was unavoidable. It came as a surprise, however, that the

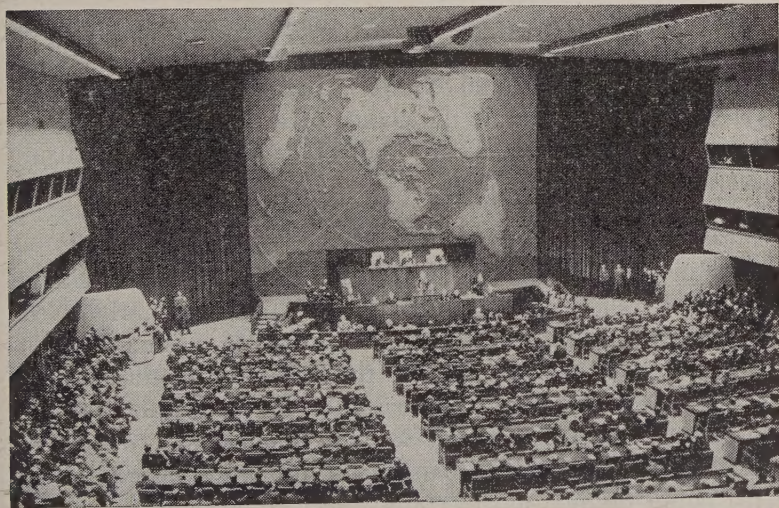


United Nations was used so unashamedly as an instrument of national policy, and that the Security Council was made a diplomatic battlefield rather than "a center for harmonizing the actions of nations."

### *Importance of the UN*

Nevertheless the mere existence of the United Nations is a major factor in world affairs. No matter how inferior it is in fact to our fancy, it is the only instrument available for maintaining world-wide international contact. It offers the only place for open discussion. Even if such discussion does not lead to agreement and even if it increases some fears and forebodings, it is better than the silent accumulation of distrust and enmity.

The United Nations provides the only ready machinery for



—Acme

Opening session of the United Nations General Assembly at Flushing Meadows, N. Y. "The United Nations remains the only instrument available for maintaining world-wide international contact," say Dr. Simons. "It offers the only place for open discussion, which is better than the silent accumulation of distrust and enmity."

adjustment of disputes, though it is extremely slow and unreliable. The mere fact that problems can be brought before the United Nations is an alternative to more dangerous methods of national policy. Most important, the United Nations is developing a whole system of organized cooperation. No doubt it is complicated and cumbersome, and its success is unpredictable. But it forms the only counterweight to the forces which today drag the war partners back into mutual suspicion and relative isolation.

One need only imagine the greater difficulties if atomic control had to be tried without the technical, political and moral support of the United Nations organization, or if the impact of colonial emancipation had to be borne without the cushioning influence which can be expected from the Trusteeship Council—and it becomes obvious that even an imperfect machinery, still creaking under the strains and stresses of the postwar period, is far better than no international organization at all. While it is impossible to say where we are heading, it is clear that the United Nations, already firmly established as a starting point, limits the choice of action, and to that extent introduces an element of calculability into a very confusing situation.

### *What the UN Owes to the US*

The moral climate which informs the Charter of the United Nations is that of the Western World, and particularly of the Anglo-Saxon tradition. The basic concepts of international organization were announced in the Moscow Declaration of October 30, 1943, which was based on an American draft. Its wording, though technically a State Department document, was the result of public discussion in the United States; it was what public opinion in this country seemed ready to accept and to support. The Resolution passed by the United States Senate on November 5, 1943, by a vote of 85 to 5, inserted parts from the Moscow Declaration verbatim.

In no other country were the implications of international



authority more thoroughly discussed than here. No other delegation had the kind of direct popular cooperation, criticism and support which "the consultants" of the United States delegation provided at San Francisco. Within the limits of compromise and diplomatic concessions, the Charter came to be as truly an American as an international document. For this reason alone it offers greater opportunities and responsibilities to the United States than to other countries.

Furthermore, the techniques used in the different agencies of the United Nations are primarily those developed under a representative government. An American will feel much more at home in the Councils, committees, and Assembly meetings of the United Nations than a spokesman of an authoritarian government. One may question on principle any attempt schematically to extend democratic procedures from the national to the international field. But when it is done, certainly those familiar with these techniques and convinced of their validity have an enormous advantage over others who do not know or do not accept their implications.

### *American Economic Responsibility*

The United States has an advantage over all other countries because of its influence on world prosperity. Our economic dominance is attested by statistics of American production, resources and wealth. It imposes a major political responsibility, because depression here will make for depression elsewhere, instability here will make our political motives suspect, and failure here to solve the economic problems will be taken as a failure of the whole system of which the United Nations is the international superstructure. Since it is realized that domestic and world-wide actions in the social and economic sphere are interdependent, the United Nations is the essential and indispensable instrument through which a powerful country can serve other peoples' interests as well as its own.

### *The Claim of the UN on Religion*

The United Nations is the major political channel through

which ideas of universal human brotherhood can find practical expression. Since its stated purpose is "to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of a . . . cultural or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms," it calls, as no other political organization does, on the worldwide resources of religion. Indeed it can be hoped that the great representative bodies of the Christian faith as well as of



—Religious News Service Picture

Pictured are six members of the American delegation to the International Conference of Church Leaders on the Problems of World Order held at Cambridge, England last August. Left to right, seated: Walter W. Van Kirk, executive secretary of the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace of the Federal Council of Churches; John Foster Dulles, chairman of the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace; and Reinhold Niebuhr of Union Theological Seminary. Standing, left to right: O. Frederick Nolde, dean of the graduate school, Lutheran Theological Seminary; John W. Decker of the International Missionary Council; and Henry Smith Leiper, executive secretary of the American Section of the World Council of Churches. The delegates expressed a hope that the great representative bodies of the Christian faith as well as of other religions would make a permanent effort to influence the decisions of the international peace organizations.



other religions will find a permanent place in the Economic and Social Council, to which they have as much claim as the World Federation of Trade Unions or other economic organizations. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which starts from the assumption that "it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed," cannot possibly disregard the essential role which religion has to play in this program.

## Misuse of the United Nations

Since the United Nations is an organization "based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members," it is not inspired by an ideal beyond the present political reality. It is beset, however, by the discrepancy between this traditional concept and the facts as they were shaped by the war. During the war small countries lost much of their independence, and great powers were running the world very much as they chose. Now things are different. As the common danger disappeared, the smaller nations regained some freedom of action, and the big ones lost their over-riding interest in unity.

### *The Collapse of War Unity*

It is important to remember that military necessities were the common denominator on which war unity was based. Military strategy was the most exclusive preoccupation of the United States; we decided major political issues in the light of military expediency. The British leaders were more keenly aware of political implications, but as they were militarily weaker they had to compromise their political interests. The Russians were in the most fortunate position, for their military needs and their political interests coincided at least on the European front. On the whole it can be said that all the United Nations made their efforts, marched their armies, sailed their ships and flew their airplanes in order to defeat the Axis. They got where they find themselves today in the process of waging war against Germany and Japan.

For reasons which are not yet fully explained the Allies found themselves at the end of the fighting not shoulder to shoulder but face to face, along fronts from which the enemy had disappeared. In Korea, in Venezia Giulia, and still more impressively in Austria and Germany, a vast military establishment which up to the last battle represented a common effort suddenly acquired entirely new characteristics. Positions gained against Germany or Japan looked quite differently after these two countries ceased to be an immediate threat. Instruments of common policy like the Control Councils in the defeated countries proved to be rather tenuous bonds, compared with the overwhelming reality of extended lines of demarcation with road blocks and barbed wire. New animosities developed which are reaching in the conference rooms of the United Nations.

### *Relapse into Traditional Concepts*

It is not surprising that in an attempt to reorient themselves, people everywhere find difficulty in replacing at the same time the framework within which the reorientation has to be done. Rather than trying to adjust post-war policies to the concepts of the United Nations, most of us fall back upon the pre-war pattern. What happened or did not happen during the war is now interpreted in traditional terms. For many people this seems to be the only way to make sense out of the present situation. Post-war positions are related to pre-war motives. The whole debate on imperialism, expansionism and aggressiveness is confused by this backward-looking attitude. The greatest obstacle to international cooperation in the United Nations is that no representative is supposed to act as anything but the protector of his nation's interest, and that nobody expects anybody to be more than a national spokesman.

### *Wrong Use of the UN*

The disagreements among the big powers are misinterpreted, and they have wider effects than were anticipated when the United Nations Organization was developed. Then, wisely, the



actual settlement of accounts was left to the victorious belligerents, and temporary action against the vanquished was exempted from the authority of the United Nations. Thereby the main area of possible conflicts among the victors was to be kept outside of the new organization. The way in which both we and the Russians emphasized the need and assumed the possibility of big power cooperation, as well as the assurances given the smaller nations on the use of the veto, indicate clearly that nobody expected the United Nations to be affected immediately by the difficult and troublesome liquidation of the war. The United Nations was to be an organization for keeping future peace, not for liquidating the recent war. Action against the former enemies, or any other action which might become necessary before the Security Council could really exercise its responsibilities, was to be left to the four signers of the Moscow Declaration, namely the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and China, who were later joined by France.

There is no doubt that the Security Council is not yet ready for action, because no member has entered the special agreements by which it is supposed to make available to the Council armed forces and other assistance. Nevertheless, the procedure which has developed since the Security Council began its work is the reverse of what it ought to be under the Charter. Not only do the signatories of the Moscow Declaration fail to consult with one another or with other members of the United Nations "for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security," but they throw into the lap of the Security Council many matters which clearly result from the war, or which present problems of the pending peace settlement.

### *Maintenance of Troops Abroad*

The maintenance of troops in other countries, for instance, is expressly mentioned in the Moscow agreement which says "that after termination of hostilities they will not employ their military forces within the territories of other states except for the purposes envisaged in this declaration, and after joint con-

sultation." It is for this reason, and not for the points made in the Security Council, that the Russian-sponsored investigation of armies of occupation does not belong on the agenda of any United Nations agency. Similarly the continued presence of Russian troops in Iran, the discussion of which in the Security Council did so much to weaken the reputation of the United Nations, was a matter for the big powers to tackle between themselves. The same is true of Great Britain's military role in Greece and of the presence of military forces in Indonesia, Syria, Lebanon or anywhere "within the territories of other states." The sad and simple fact is that basic disagreements between the big powers prevent consultation on the level envisaged in the Moscow Declaration. Yet nothing can possibly be gained by shifting such issues to the United Nations. For Council and Assembly are not courts of appeal, but only a wider arena where the same nations are still contestants who will not accept an umpire.

### ***Publicity Magnifies Controversy***

The United Nations holds definite promise only as far as it is used as an instrument of good will. Ill will could be more easily overcome in less public negotiations, for publicity simply magnifies what is exposed to it, and cannot discriminate between minor and major matters, good and bad intentions, or weak and strong arguments. As things stand, there is more danger than advantage in the publicity given to international grievances. Instead of feeding the United Nations controversial items for the agenda of its different agencies, governments ought to give it time to grow stronger through the experience of achievement in less controversial areas.

### ***Premature Use of UN***

In trying to make the United Nations effective as speedily as possible, and in referring to it matters neither strictly within its competence nor suitable for its growth, we are acting under the illusion that essential disagreement on one level can be overcome by partial agreement on another. We reason that if



we cannot agree on Germany, we may try to agree on Italy, or if we cannot agree at a conference of foreign ministers, we should have a meeting of the heads of state. If the big four can't work together, perhaps a conference of all belligerents will be better, and if we can't come to terms within that group let us move on to the United Nations. All of this ends up in the argument that since we cannot find a way of living together peacefully in a society of nations, let us establish world government.

Actually the United Nations was built on the basic agreement to fight the aggressors. This was a sufficiently strong foundation as long as the war lasted. Now the United Nations is left as a structure no longer based on immediate interest but supported only by long range purposes and by a general and therefore vague sentiment in favor of peace. Therefore it cannot possibly prove itself as long as the peace it is supposed to protect has yet to be made. Meanwhile it is a most valuable framework which must be carefully preserved and protected against exposure to more pressure than it can stand.

### ***Peace Cannot Be Made Through UN***

It is too late now to argue whether the whole schedule of our peace effort was right, and whether we should have given precedence to an effort to prepare in detail the peace settlements of Europe and Asia before preparing and propagandizing an international organization. But it is not too late to point out that peace cannot be made through the United Nations, and that until it is made all members will have to try to keep their long range hopes under control lest they force the issues and thereby destroy the present precarious equilibrium. This is a difficult attitude to maintain, because it demands a combination of optimism and resignation at a time when most people want to give themselves entirely to one or the other. It is also an unpopular policy because it complicates matters in a situation where simplicity is what people want.

Nevertheless, significant threats to peace cannot yet be put

on the agenda of the United Nations, which can become an instrument of peace only if it succeeds in maintaining a bearable political climate and in exercising the steady but inoffensive pressure under which peace settlements can be made. One needs only to look at the possible conflicts between victors and vanquished, among the victors big and small, and between victors and those dependent on them in colonial areas, in order to know how protracted a process peace making is going to be. All through it the United Nations will have to be preserved by an attitude of watchful waiting. Nobody, not even its members, ought to be misled by the theatrics of its meetings.

### ***Big Powers Must Make the Peace***

Essentially peace making is a matter of big power politics. One may regret this fact on principle, but practically the participation of smaller nations does not seem to improve matters. The consultative meeting at Paris hardly demonstrated that the smaller nations have a special reservoir of wisdom and restraint which the big powers could tap. Though Australia and Canada made valuable suggestions, no delegation was sufficiently consistent or found enough support to influence effectively the course of the deliberations. The "democratization" of the peace negotiations simply proved that arguing in public, voting, and accepting formal majority decisions as answers to vital questions are effective processes only in an integrated society. They cannot possibly substitute for such integration when it does not exist.

### ***The UN and An Anti-Russian Policy***

For the time being we will have to consider our relations with the Soviet Union as independent of other countries' votes. If we rely on majorities, we run the risk of manoeuvring the Soviet Union out of the United Nations. We should also do what we can to have brought before international bodies only matters which the Soviet Union, too, wants to have there. To be sure, we cannot count on reciprocity. But even so we shall be wise if we allow for this kind of veto beforehand.

In the present situation, the United Nations is emphatically not a possible instrument for an anti-Russian policy. Rather it is a potential means of getting away from such a policy. Today the Western bloc is the natural result of two factors: a lack of basic conflicts among the nations of the Western world, and a common reaction to the challenge of the Soviet position. This bloc is a reality only in the realm of diplomacy because it is useful only in a situation short of war. Its unity depends on the antagonistic attitude of Russia and her neighbors and does not need Anglo-Saxon leadership. But in case of war, groups and parties would form within this combination, and communism would become a major issue within most of the countries.

## The USA and the USSR

Though it seems by now trite to say so, it has to be emphasized that the future of the United Nations depends on the answers to two questions: whether the short-range disagreements with the Soviet Union can be settled directly and one by one, and whether meanwhile the general situation will improve so much that long-range incompatibilities can be borne without disrupting the United Nations. Both questions are closely related to the problem of American-Russian relations.

### *Misunderstanding and Name-calling*

All through the recent war, we hypnotized ourselves into believing that we and the Russians, when discussing fascism and democracy, were talking about the same things. We know now that whatever agreement there was on these terms was emotional rather than rational. Hence it does not exist any longer. The Russians and their friends, with the arbitrary oversimplification which is the essence of propaganda, call "fascist" whomever they want to criticize. If it were only a loose use of words by individuals it would be bad enough. Unfortunately it is an official practice backed by the powerful influence of both the Soviet Government and the Communist parties.

We, on the other hand, have similar difficulties with the



terms communism and democracy. The United Nations Charter itself, in its sweeping use of words which need to be redefined and cleansed of the corrosion brought about by propaganda, is contributing to the confusion.

### ***New Power Problems***

The prospects for American-Russian relations cannot be judged in the light of past experience. It is not sufficient to say that there were no real conflicts between the two countries in the past, and that therefore there need not be any in the future. That cliché is not correct. On both sides of the Pacific, American and Russian interests clashed considerably. If these clashes did not lead to war, it was due to the general international setting in which they occurred much more than to their lack of importance. In any event, the past cannot possibly suffice as a guide for an essentially new situation. Even if Russia simply returned to the traditional lines of her pre-revolutionary foreign policy and merely renewed the familiar pressures toward the Mediterranean and the China Sea, the effects would be quite different. The power positions of both the United States and the Soviet Union have changed, and America's stake in the Near and Far East differs fundamentally from what it was before the World Wars.

### ***The Ambiguity of Russian Policy***

The real difficulty, however, lies in the combination of traditional nationalism and social revolution which is the most significant phenomenon of our times. When confined to one country, socialism becomes nationalism—of this the record of the Russian revolution leaves no doubt. The combination of a traditional nationalistic policy with an appeal to revolutionary programs makes the Russian problem an entirely new one; it justifies the doubts as to whether it can be handled in an organization dominated by international and conservative viewpoints.

From the American standpoint, Russian policy seems unpredictable because it uses the techniques of external pressure and internal influence interchangeably. To a world which seeks

stability after the enormous upheavals of the war, this unreliability is offensive. This explains the general impression that Russia is aggressive. Yet it is impossible to say how final and unalterable this tendency is. Even the Russian leaders may not know how innate in their policy the element of aggression is. As a nationalistic power, the Soviet Union wants peace and security; as a revolutionary society—which it still is in relation to others, though not any longer internally—it does not lament the risks of insecurity and fear elsewhere.

Objectively this makes Russian foreign policy quite inconsistent. But its shifting emphasis simply reflects changing evaluations of short-range interests which can be served by the one or the other method. The main point is that both are equally acceptable to the Soviet leaders. Therefore the contradictions which confuse the Western world do not worry those who produce them. Until recently it seemed to be established Russian policy not to extend or strengthen the authority of the United Nations Assembly, but to maintain the superior position of the Security Council. When the Security Council failed to handle the issue of Allied troops in non-enemy countries, however, it was the Russians who put it on the agenda of the Assembly. They followed the same line in regard to the Franco government. When the Security Council did not agree on any action, they supported discussion by the Assembly. It is safe to assume that they would change their attitude even on the veto if they could count on a safe majority in the Council.

### *The Ambiguity of American Policy*

But this ambivalence is by no means a characteristic of Russian foreign policy only. The United States too is conducting its international affairs on two different levels. The one is genuinely democratic. Americans have a tradition which makes them place real faith in majority decisions. This faith has not yet been challenged because majority decisions are at present our strongest instrument in international negotiations. But this can last only as long as the structure of the United Nations is

based on "the sovereign equality of independent states." If ever a world authority started to count noses rather than nations, democracy and majority in world affairs would take on an entirely new meaning.

Meanwhile we cannot escape the fact that our own vote is not only counted but also weighed in the scales of political and economic power. There it is not American democracy but capitalism which counts. But where the Russian leaders are entirely comfortable in their strange combination of nationalism and revolution, we are decidedly uncomfortable in the familiar blend of democracy and free enterprise. A unity of purpose permits the Russians to use freely their different techniques; American foreign policy is inhibited by its attempt to find in principles the unifying force which its social structure no longer provides.

For this reason our professed concern for democracy in Eastern Europe and for free trade on the Danube and elsewhere looks less convincing to others than it does to us. Similarly the elimination of the veto in matters of atomic control is more correct in principle than in practice. And to advocate trusteeship but hedge about former mandated areas now in our possession is one of the most unpleasant of our inconsistencies. The one-sided economic privileges we secured from the Philippines do not jibe with our insistence on equal business opportunities. And this sad list could be prolonged.

### *The Conflict of Inconsistent Policies*

It is difficult to appraise such a situation in non-political terms. But it seems safe to say that to the Russians power is not a problem but a tool, while to many Americans it is a puzzle, and its bewildering effects create a deep moral uneasiness. This contrast in attitudes is sharpened by differences in national conditions. In America a vocal public opinion affects strongly the makers of foreign policy; in the Soviet Union an elite is capable of molding public opinion according to plan. Whatever the moral merits of each country's claims, our uneasiness does credit to our capacity for self-criticism, and Rus-



sian equanimity points up the self-centered righteousness of the Soviet system. The result is a temporary disproportion between potential and available power.

In the long run, America will be better off because it can understand much more easily and much more correctly the forces in the world which make for peace and for a growing international order. In the short run, however, there are contradictory elements within both the United States and the Soviet Union which acerbate the conflicts between them. Both are new to the amount of power which, ironically enough, they secured not only for themselves but for each other. Both carry into the post-war period the traditional elements of their strength. America retains the productive capacity which is the historical achievement of capitalism. But this very capacity creates the need for trade and markets which now mars our policy of democratic principle. And Russia keeps alive a pan-slavic nationalism which is the historic instrument of her security, but which limits her revolutionary appeal.

These two traditions not only create tensions by themselves; they are also incompatible. We fight Russia's attempt to extend pan-slavism beyond its ethnical limits and the Russians fight our economic expansion beyond the area where capitalism prevails. What is left is to block off two spheres against each other, with lines of demarcation running between them and within them. This process is in full swing. It is based on the reality of "two worlds", and of two blocs which coalesce automatically without need for diplomatic or direct pressures, even though both are used in addition.

### *Common Concerns of US and USSR*

But the two countries meet on another level where their contacts are less obvious. This is the common concern of American democracy and Russian revolution with the "pursuit of happiness" and the well-being of the "common man". It is easy to get lost in generalities if one tries to describe this essential common denominator. But there is some concrete evidence of

its existence, though it consists only of similar expression of social ambitions and political purposes.

In the agreement between the United States and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics on Mutual Aid (Lend-Lease Agreement) it is stated that the final terms of settlement "shall include provisions for agreed action of the United States of America and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics . . . directed to the expansion, by appropriate international and domestic measures, of production, employment, and the exchange and consumption of goods, which are the material foundations of the liberty and welfare of all peoples." The concluding words contain one of the most interesting integrations of capitalist and socialist thought. They make the capitalist assumption that only expanding international economy will establish the welfare of all peoples. But they add the socialist thesis that there is a material basis of the liberty of all peoples. It is doubtful whether this integration will help to make the coming settlement of Lend-Lease accounts any easier. But it cannot be denied that here we have, in diplomatic language and in legal form, a formula which expresses an important social agreement, though it still needs to be implemented politically.

### ***Common Emphasis on Human Rights***

During the New Deal a National Resources Planning Board tried to introduce into American economy an element of responsible planning and of social restraint. Its name and program were too offensive for Congress. The Board was abolished. Among its documents and files, safely stored away in the National Archives, there is a "New Declaration of Rights" which proclaims the right to work, to fair pay, to adequate food, to security with freedom from fear of old age, want, dependency, sickness, unemployment and accident; the right to equality before the law, to education, and to rest, recreation and adventure. A vast majority of Americans would subscribe to such a declaration, and most of the rest would pay lip service to it.

The Russian Constitution proclaims the right to employment and payment for work in accordance with its quantity and quality; the right to maintenance in old age, in case of sickness or loss of capacity to work; the right to education and the right to rest and leisure, and equality of rights of citizens.

Here are two documents springing from two entirely different societies and yet so similar in approach that there must be some common climate in these diverse worlds.

### *The Parting of the Ways*

Unfortunately it is not yet possible to rely on such congruity. There are two more articles in the proposed American Bill of Rights, namely "the right to live in a system of free enterprise, free from compulsory labor, irresponsible private power, arbitrary public authority and unregulated monopolies," and "the right to come and go, to speak or be silent, free from the spyings of secret political police." In the Soviet Constitution we read that freedom of speech, of the press and other civil rights are insured "by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing presses, communication facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights," and that "the most active and politically conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class and other sections of the working people unite in the Communist Party which is the vanguard . . . and the leading core of all organizations of the working people both public and state."

Here we have the essence of the disagreement. The American statement first attempts to point out the abuses of both the communist and the capitalist systems: compulsory labor and arbitrary public authority on the one hand, irresponsible private power and unregulated monopolies on the other. These are neatly put on the same level of obnoxiousness. Then it goes on to the heart of the conflict. Whether it be freedom of speech, of the press, or only of information—so far apart in definition and in fact here and in Russia; whether displaced persons are to be treated as individuals or as nationals, as citizens or as



subjects of the State—so extensively argued in the Economic and Social Council and its committees; or whether freedom means the right to act individually, as is our prevailing concern, or to participate collectively, as is the Soviet concept: in these alternatives lies the parting of the ways even in the realm of hopes and intentions.

### *Neither Extreme Will Prevail*

Of one fact, however, one can be sure. At every moment of history peoples as well as individuals will find themselves in different stages of freedom or dependence. We cannot even anticipate that the more extreme forms of licentious disorder on the one hand and tyrannical order on the other will disappear from society. The same war which was fought against some of their excesses strengthened them in other respects.

The majority of people, however, will not see the alternatives so sharply, nor find themselves wholly on either side. Therefore Lincoln's phrase, much quoted now, cannot be applied to the world. Neither is it half free and half slave, nor a house divided against itself. The issues are not only between nations. They cut horizontally as well as vertically. Yet even if one could simplify an essential conflict into the only one, the world could survive without resolving it today or tomorrow. For we are not yet a closely knit society in which certain fundamental disagreements may mean destruction. We are still a loose organization of nations and peoples, of states and their governments. The advantage of such an organization is that it can bend under certain strains which would break a stronger structure. By the same token the danger of superimposed order is that it has to eliminate disagreement which it cannot stand.

Meanwhile there is a broad stream of common purpose and interest which is identical with the onward movement of the social forces in both the West and the East, a coincidence of the new trends which gradually are submerging the old ones, and a convergence toward peace and prosperity. Both Americans and Russians have learned that they must want peace for

others as much as for themselves if they are to get it. But they have not yet grasped fully the fact that prosperity too is indivisible.

### *Unifying Forces in Other Countries*

There are large areas of the world which are still outside of both the Anglo-Saxon and the Soviet orbit and not yet committed to either. They are powerfully stirred by the idea of social improvement, national freedom and individual rights. In China we see a civil war fought for national issues but at the same time reflecting the wider conflicts of the world. We see there, too, the stubborn efforts to reconcile the two sides, and the use of international diplomacy to press one's point to the limits of safety but to avoid the irrevocable break.

In Europe the struggle is less violent but more complicated, since it represents the search for a pattern which may somehow contain what is common to Russia and the West, while at the same time eliminating the most objectionable elements in both.

Less consciously, the people of India, Indonesia and other colonial areas are striving for a new freedom which should be neither regimented nor chaotic. They seem to prefer the traditional slogans of the democratic liberation as their political platform, and the promises of the socialist transformation as their economic program. To the extent to which these influences grow, they will strongly support the unifying forces in the modern world.

### *Material Interests and a New Morality*

Christians ought to recognize that the world is confronted with more than a political or economic problem. The misery of the post-war world forces people everywhere to think in material terms first. But their quest is of greater significance. For the first time in their history millions of human beings are questioning the social status quo. They do not accept their station in life any longer as ordained by God or fixed by fate, but regard it as man made and therefore subject to change. As they clamour for better standards of living, higher income and social

security, they claim in tangible terms the inalienable rights of the individual and the dignity of the human person.

In the Western tradition, too, material interests were an important part of the fight for freedom. Taxes were as central a problem of democracy as was habeas corpus. Today millions of poor people regard livelihood as the essence of liberty. It is entirely conceivable that more material satisfaction will gradually lay the foundation for a common morality in a new social order. For a long time this morality may be weaker even than the tenuous bond which our common faith provides for a strife-torn civilization, but it will certainly be better than no common ethics at all. International morality will grow, if it does, not in the Security Council or the Assembly, but in the Economic and Social Council and its related agencies.

### ***Russian-American Incompatibility***

The incompatibility of the American and Russian systems of thought, reinforced by two different types of make-believe, is the strongest single factor underneath the quarrels among United Nations members, and an even greater reality in dividing the world than are economic and military lines of demarcation. There are no indications that it can be overcome. On the contrary, it grows with expanding contacts. The factual and political disagreements in the Security Council become fundamental splits in the Economic and Social Council and its subcommittees. In the former the Russians fight what they regard as the dangerous imperialism of American and British influence in far distant areas. In the latter we fight what to us seems the ominous imperialism of a state reaching out for the bodies and souls of its subjects even beyond the territorial limits of its power.

Rightly both sides complain that arguments do not change basic positions. The more these attitudes are discussed and the more thoroughly interpreted, the more conscious they become and the more stubbornly they are held. If it is true that the Economic and Social Council will become increasingly important,



then cooperation with the Soviet Union will become correspondingly more difficult. The quarrels in the Security Council are faint echoes of the receding war. The fights in the non-political international bodies are new danger signals.

### *Hope for the UN*

It is quite clear that no international organization is yet strong enough to solve fundamental dissensions between the big powers. But there are indications that the United Nations can survive them.

The first is that the present difficulties are not immutable historical factors. One does not minimize their seriousness or magnitude if one remembers that conflicts which held the center of the human scene at one time became less absorbing issues as they were pushed aside by others. It is hard to recapture today the emotions with which Reformation and Counter-Reformation fought their battles. Since then certainly neither Protestantism nor Catholicism has moved much from its fundamental positions; yet for better or worse neither side would now wage war for its beliefs. This change is the result of a complex transformation of society by which the relations between religion and politics, church and state, spiritual and material concerns were profoundly altered. It is by no means impossible, and in the light of contemporary developments not even improbable, that similar shifts may—without resolving the contradictions of current social and political systems—yet assuage the excitement which is mutually provoked among opponents.

### *Comparative Strength of US and USSR*

The second indication of hope for the United Nations is simply that the United States is, and for some time will be, incomparably more powerful than the Soviet Union. The general misunderstanding about this is due to the fact that the Russians fought a war of survival with the enemy on their territory, with the last ounce of their national strength spent on the effort, only to emerge as the strongest single influence in



—Acme

President Truman poses with the members of the Atomic Energy Commission, which has been entrusted by Congress with "the supervision of an economic, social and technical revolution." Left to right: Sumner T. Pike, former member of the Securities and Exchange Commission; Lewis L. Strauss, New York banker; President Truman; David Lilienthal; Robert F. Bacher, Cornell University physicist; and William W. Waymack, editor of the *Des Moines Register and Tribune*.

the post-war world. It is this surprising change in relative weight which makes people forget that the immediately available power of the Soviet Union will be affected by its terrible war losses for a long time to come. The United States, on the other hand, was the inexhaustible "arsenal of democracy", physically untouched by the war, only to emerge into the post-war period as a country torn by democratic dissent. It is this equally surprising contrast between mobilized war power and a consequent peace paralysis which deceives Americans and others about the American strength.

## Opportunities for the USA

### *Control of Atomic Energy*

The current discussion on the control of atomic energy is of

crucial import. Undoubtedly the success or failure of the United Nations will depend on whether it is possible to set up within its framework an acceptable international supervision which combines the constructive ideas of the American proposal with the constraining elements necessary in any scheme of control. It would be quite wrong to say that nothing else is important. As a matter of fact, many problems now before the United Nations are entirely unrelated to the threat of the atomic bomb and have to be solved on their own merits. But the whole climate of international politics is affected, as it were, by the radiation of atomic fission. Hence no United States policy in the United Nations can be consistent and clear cut as long as this major question remains unsolved.

While it is difficult of achievement, the program for atomic development under international control is, at the same time, most promising. In spite of some shortcomings in detail, in the main the American proposal is imaginative, daring and highminded. It is significant that the Soviet counter-proposals are quite conservative, uninspired and by no means expressive of a new political or social approach. Capitalist democracy in this instance shows enough flexibility to suggest an international course which is essentially socialistic. One might be tempted to draw hopeful conclusions from a situation where the so-called internationalists insist on national sovereignty and the suspect imperialists favor supra-national authority. The unfortunate fact is, however, that the two concepts are not approaching each other by way of modification, but are simply reversed and therefore as far apart as before. The solution has to come by compromise. The diplomat may have to ask first how far the other party should give way. The Christian will begin by asking himself what concessions he ought to make.

### *The Timing of Events*

The calendar of events in the disclosure and the use of the atomic bomb must be remembered. The first explosion came off in New Mexico on July 16, 1945. At that time the repre-



sentatives of the Big Three were in Berlin, where the so-called Potsdam Conference began on the following day and lasted until August 2. One of the major results of Potsdam was that the Russians publicly identified themselves with the attitude of the other powers toward Japan, and secretly confirmed their commitment to join in the war against her. On August 6, the first atomic bomb exploded over Hiroshima. The Soviet Union declared war on Japan on August 8. The next day the second bomb destroyed large parts of Nagasaki. Nobody denies that the Russians were not told about the bomb until the first public announcement was made.

This American reticence, in which the British joined, has to be judged in the light of other developments. Early in the war against Japan influential people in this country clamoured for Russia's entry into the Pacific struggle, sometimes in rather objectionable language. The Russians' insistence on the second front was frequently answered with unveiled hints at the situation in the Far East. But as the American attacks succeeded, American interest in Soviet help decreased. As one reviews the calendar of events, it is not difficult to read into it a race between the United States which hoped to defeat Japan practically single-handed, and the Soviet Union which wanted to be in on the end of the war and share the fruits of victory in the Far East.

We promised the Russians this share of the fruits at a time when we could not foresee the rapid deterioration of Japan's strength. The share seemed appropriate at the time of the Yalta Conference, but too much half a year later. In addition, official sources in this country indicated clearly that Japan really had been defeated before the atomic bombs were dropped, and that Japan's power in China and especially in Manchukuo had been grossly over-rated. All of this makes a confusing picture. It has grave moral implications regarding the use of the bomb. But it also must have had its effects on American-Russian relations. If even Americans have good reason to question the actions of their government—and many, especially Christian spokesmen,

have done so—then doubts and distrusts in other lands are not surprising. And since all of these developments preceded Stalin's and Molotov's "campaign" speeches of February, 1946, which emphasized the existing international tensions, one cannot possibly explain the present difficulties as due to the Russians only.

### *Need for American Contrition*

The moral position of the United States is another reason why in the matter of atomic control we have to do more than show political imagination and social daring. We must act from contrition, not because by doing so we may influence others, but because it is the only way in which we can regain a sense of unity of purpose and of moral strength. Nevertheless such a change of heart will certainly have its repercussions elsewhere. Actions of the United States strongly influence the whole texture of international relations. Nobody can say exactly in what sense. This is the reason why an American foreign policy which claims to support the United Nations must dare to do so as a matter of principle and at the risk of failure, rather than as a means for getting along—be it with the Russians, the British, the internationalists or the isolationists in this country.

Negatively, this means that we do not need to be hypnotized as we are now by the Soviet Union, its actions and reactions. As long as criticism of our foreign policy is informed almost exclusively by considerations of what it does to the Russians, and what they will do because of it, the debate is bound to be inconclusive. Positively, it means that there cannot be an element of stability and assurance in the United Nations until we begin to ask what America ought to do because of its own sins of omission and commission, because of its responsibilities, and because of its advantages over others.

### *The Limits of American Risks*

The next question, of course, is what we can afford to do within the limits of national security, in line with our national interest, and in accordance with all the psychological factors

which enter into any political proposition. But it makes all the difference whether one starts from watching others, then tries to define one's own interest within a set of observed or anticipated reactions, and finally tries to relate this restricted satisfaction of self-interest to one's duties and responsibilities, as we have been doing, or whether one proceeds the other way around.

The United States can risk more than any other country without compromising its security. It can invest in international peace, and particularly in the United Nations, without depending on immediate returns. In fact it can gamble as long as it keeps its stake reasonably proportionate to its available means and to the possible gains. At this particular time the United States can afford to stop making atomic bombs and thereby remove what is an illogical and unethical attitude. It can accept the Russian proposal for international agreement to outlaw the bomb, which is in itself entirely innocuous and quite insufficient; but we shall have to insist that dismantling and destruction of existing facilities must wait until effective international controls exist.

The moral and psychological impact of such a policy cannot possibly be today what it might have been last winter. Still it will be great, at least in easing our own conscience and in making our arguments more persuasive. It is also the least we can do in order to make clear that we really want less rather than more danger accumulated in atomic bombs, and that we do so as a matter of principle rather than as a method of self-protection.

### *International Control of Bases*

For similar reasons the United States can afford to accept international control of bases and to suggest international control of armaments. It is to be regretted that we did not take the initiative on these questions in the United Nations Assembly. But we can still make up in perseverance and in working out details what we lost through hesitation and divided counsels. All of this is feasible, even in terms of public opinion at home,



because Americans are still bewildered and not yet hardened into a final rejection of any particular approach to peace. It is also essential because it will break the dangerous chain of cause and effect which by now has us so entangled that everybody is cramped by it, and nobody can handle any of its links.

### *Getting Perspective on Ourselves*

Public opinion in the United States is far ahead of other countries in its willingness to explore the possibilities of world government. But it maintains a strangely self-centered attitude. How many Americans who are talking of world democracy realize that we are in a minority in every respect? We enjoy an economy of plenty, unplanned and unregulated, almost alone in a world where scarcity calls for planning. We are citizens of what is predominantly a "white man's" country, with all the dangerous implications of the term, while the whites in the world are far out-numbered by the so-called colored races. We are Christians in a world where non-Christian religions have more followers and often play a more vigorous part in society. We are democrats in an international community where non-democratic patterns are much more numerous.

Our contribution cannot be limited to preaching our principles or to imposing our practices. For the reasons stated above it will have to consist primarily in material help. But if this tangible assistance is informed by the political principles of the American Constitution and the Anglo-Saxon tradition, and inspired by Christian ethics, it will help to confirm the common morality without which world order is impossible.

### *Looking Below the Surface*

Compared with these basic issues all the transient strains and stresses which make the work of the United Nations difficult are of minor importance. They are matters of political adjustment in innumerable details of which few but the experts can keep track, and on which hardly anybody but the active participants can have any influence.

It is regrettable that public interest centers on the Security Council and its premature activities, and on the Assembly with its deceptive democracy. One would hope that more Americans will make the effort to keep themselves informed on what the Economic and Social Council and its committees do; on the tasks and functions of the many agencies related to the United Nations; and on the role the United States is playing in these fields. Though our record is far from perfect, it does show the American government at its best. In this whole area its initiative and imagination, its patience and sympathy, supported by the American people, have done much to belie the suspicions which our political blunders aroused, and to counteract the disappointment which our general lack of orientation provoked.

### *Changing Ourselves*

It is equally regrettable that the significant contributions of



—Acme

A scene at the State Department during the formal signing of the Bretton Woods agreement by 31 nations. Sir G. S. Bajpai, agent general for India, is affixing his signature. Dr. Simons regrets that "public interest centers on the Security Council and its premature activities, and on the Assembly with its deceptive democracy." He hopes that more Americans will make the effort to keep themselves informed of the implications of the Bretton Woods agreement and of the Economic and Social Council and its committees.

other countries remain unappreciated. The main reaction of America to the trend of world affairs has been criticism of others. No doubt much of it is deserved. But one of the basic facts of human life is that we cannot change others without changing ourselves. This is true on the personal as well as on the international level. Conversely, as others are changing they influence us. The great current of human affairs flows all over the earth and makes the world one, though we are still unable to give political expression to this fact.

The concords and discords among nations are repeated not only within the nations, but also within each citizen. The better informed he is, the more conscious of his society, the more aware of international affairs, the more will he experience the contradictions of the world as strains and stresses within himself. It is the ultimate risk of freedom that it leaves the solution of these contradictions to the individual and to his ability to do what is right, precisely as it means risking the loss of freedom if more and more people leave this responsibility to the authority of leaders and experts.

### ***Our Present Responsibility***

In the last analysis then, and as far as Americans are concerned, the future of the United Nations will be decided by the United States and by each one of us. Therefore it is more fruitful to find out how we can best contribute to peace, than to analyze in detail the weaknesses and shortcomings of its international organization. It is certainly too early anyhow to draw conclusions from experience, because the United Nations has hardly begun to function. Criticism except in purely constitutional terms is decidedly premature. Much of it seems almost like an escape from immediate responsibilities, particularly if it consists of discussing mechanics rather than men, and formulas rather than functions.

It is not easy to state frankly and concretely what we can do; conclusions on this issue are as much a matter of opinion as of reasoning.



### *Temptations to Overcome*

For America the United Nations is a temptation. We are by far the strongest power within it, and much stronger than if we were alone. Backed as we are by a combination of friends and dependents, sharers of our viewpoint and candidates for our favors, we can count on a safe majority. For this very reason we ought to be wary of decisions by voting, and never push them. We, more than any other country, can afford to wait for international developments. Less harm is done if issues are left pending than if a decision is forced which does not provide a real solution.

We are also tempted by our own absolute and relative power. The United States has a greater safety margin than any other country—geographically, economically and militarily. For this very reason we ought not to display it. We disparage the real sources of our strength if we use the show of armed force as a means to support our diplomacy. There are, of course, military tasks which we have to fulfill in continuing our war effort. But beyond them we ought to give moral rather than military encouragement. Food and equipment would produce more lasting results than visiting warships.

### *Let the Charter Stand*

We are tempted by circumstance too. It so happens that certain changes in the United Nations Charter which are popular and sound in principle are also advantageous to us and disadvantageous to others. Once more, for this very reason we ought not to support them but rather bear with the restrictions which the Charter imposes. Too many well-meaning reformers find themselves in league with politicians who seek changes much less for the sake of a better world than for a still stronger America. It is obvious that idealists often become the innocent advocates of a world dominated by the democracies. For the non-democratic peoples this innocence is indistinguishable from imperialism. It is a waste of time to work for the mechanical improvement of the Charter of the United Nations. World

order cannot rest on procedures. Laws do not work if they are the synthetic result of technical reasoning. There is a definite danger in the American reliance on the gadgets of government and on the perfection of methods before men are willing to use them or agreed on the ends to be served.

We are tempted finally by the advantage of experience. Democratic techniques and procedures form part of the pattern which Anglo-Saxon influence has spread over most of the world. The United Nations functions within this framework. To us and to those who share in these traditions it is entirely familiar. To others it is alien and even ominous. Instead of running the machinery of international conferences as if they were committee meetings at home, we ought to avoid the method of gaining advantage by parliamentary routine. Here, too, the risk of leaving matters unsettled is small compared with the danger of being right by rules of procedure only. It is encouraging that the whole world is voluntarily trying to conduct its international business on the precedents of representative government. But we endanger the possible results if we do not use our opportunities with the utmost restraint.

### *Reconcile Domestic and Foreign Policy*

More difficult still is it for the United States to coordinate its international ambitions with its actions at home. We are fortunate in having a domestic system of atomic energy control which fits well into the international system we propose. But in most other fields there is a disparity between the program of an ordered stability, based on expansion and growth, which we advocate for the world, and the license of everybody for himself, with the prospect of major economic disturbances, which we practice at home. Unless Americans as individuals and as groups learn to see their economic interests as related not only to their national economy but to the well being of the world which depends so much on us, we are apt to frustrate our own efforts, or to be regarded as charlatans who do not take the medicine they recommend.

While we are fond of over-all planning on a world scale, particularly if it comes to agencies and institutions, mechanical devices and constitutional schemes, we like much less the details of national planning and international concessions which are necessary if United Nations agencies are to be effective. As long as we find ourselves in this quandary—which really is the most baffling dilemma of our society—we can hardly expect others to accept our way of life as if it were a consistent and simple precept. For Americans the consistency of our way of life lies in its tradition and its success. But most people do not share either. Its simplicity we see in the fact that somehow it survived its own contradictions. But in other countries things went differently, and therefore new solutions are needed. We ought to realize that though America still holds great promise for the world, its present practice is not a workable model for many nations.

### *Our Resources for Peace*

The most important contribution we can make is an investment in peace not for the purpose of appeasing any other country, but as an experiment for our own sake. Of course our risk cannot be greater than the margin of safety permits. If we should fail we must still be left strong and secure. It may not be possible to figure out accurately how far we can go. But it is fair to say that we have not even begun to draw up a balance sheet of our resources for peace, and certainly not made any sacrifice for it which came anywhere near the critical point.

During the war we armed, fed, clothed and financed many people in addition to ourselves. We sustained a prodigious military effort. We increased most of our production for domestic consumers on top of all of this, and prospered dizzily in the process. Yet a large part of our production was not consumed but destroyed. Does anybody doubt that even a fraction of this effort could again do wonders today? Lend-lease for peace, additional large scale gifts of machinery and equipment for reconstruction, a program of free food many times as large as



UNRRA and charity combined, bold development schemes which would fire the imagination of our own people as well as of others: such a program is feasible and if carried out would change the political and social climate of the world.

### *The Tragedies of Peace*

Why is it that we cannot convert to peace without converting to the sloth and selfishness which now characterize society as a whole in spite of the fact that innumerable individuals are eager and generous? Why is it that during the war we were at peace with ourselves and unified beyond our differences while in peace we are at war with ourselves and at cross-purposes to an extent which endangers social unity? More ironic still, during the war we were haunted by doubts whether the destruction we inflicted could possibly be right, while now we know that our self-interest can be satisfied by constructive efforts in the interest of others.

Are we ashamed to try what is clearly good politics simply because it is at the same time good deeds? Are we not missing the unique opportunity where a great national exertion would provide the moral defense against atomic danger—against which there is no physical protection—and also the material antidote for other people's envy—against which there is no moral safeguard?

### *Each Must Answer—and Act*

These are questions which each of us has to answer for himself. On his answer will depend his action. But this action together with that of countless others will help to shape American foreign policy. Increased personal sacrifice makes possible greater contributions to international charity and economic reconstruction; more active interest in the social and economic work of the United Nations makes possible closer checks on what our representatives are doing in this field—and all this can help to prepare the United States for a more constructive part in peace, just as individual acts and attitudes contributed to making it strong in war.

If it is true that the tensions within the United Nations have their counterpart in ourselves, then we must be at ease in our own conscience before we can be at peace with our neighbors. We shall have to meet this moral requirement first if we are going to find the common moral ground which material improvement can help to lay.

### *Strength for Peace*

What we seek then is not merely peace for us and for others, though we hope desperately to see it built by the victorious nations and later maintained by the United Nations. What we really want is the strength for peace which we had for war. We need it for firmness in resistance where essential values are at stake, for patience in persuasion where arguments can count, for alertness in self-control where we are tempted, for generosity in international efforts where cooperation means concessions, and for tolerance in discovering common ground. Such strength could bend to its purposes the most inadequate instrument. How much better could it use the workable machinery of the United Nations!

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## *The Reader Writes*

### **Jesus and the Eschaton**

Sirs:

I am delighted to see a systematic defense on religious and theological grounds of social action in the October issue of our *Social Action*. It is especially refreshing to see the prominence given to the impress of Walter Rauschenbusch on American religious thought.

I do confess to being a bit startled at the first sentence in the article. It may be true that the emphasis on social reform is not the emphasis made in the apocalyptic passages of

the Gospel or of the Pauline Epistles, yet social action seems to be a projection of the intention of Christ. I think the school to which I have belonged would have emphasized "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus," and "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ," as sound bases for our program of social action. Mayhap in this revolutionary age, the apocalyptic passages will have new dynamic among us. Of course, we can translate them from other-worldly escapism to an appreciation of the world-shaking forces that are now

causing to tremble the members of the body social. "It doth not yet appear what shall be," but I am confident of the relevance of the Christian social ethic to our time.

Let me thank you for this fine underpinning for any program and platform for social action.

Alfred W. Swan

Minister, First Congregational Church  
Madison, Wisconsin

## Iron Curtain to Exegesis

Sirs:

"A Theology of Social Action" in the October issue of *Social Action* is a work of penetrating analysis and profound interpretation. It deserves universal reading, and heeding.

But such general reading (by laymen at least) will be precluded by the opening section of the article, the author's rationale of Jesus' alleged eschatological illusions.

What an iron curtain to gospel exegesis that blind spot in the mind of Jesus (or of his interpreters?) still proves to be! Why is it unthinkable to scholars that the amazing rabbi of Nazareth transcended that limitation in the thinking of his time? Didn't he rise above every other "damned error" of his fellows? So much so that against their deep rutted obsessions he still stands as the inexplicable prophet, the consummate mental miracle of all time?

And his specialty, his "major", his absorbing passion was God. He understood God so transcendently that generations then and since have found it difficult not to invest the Nazarene himself with all the fullness and wisdom of the Infinite. Yet, with all that understanding of God, Jesus forsooth still attributed to Him a design for history and a discipline for his children utterly inconsistent with his nature as Jesus otherwise knew him.

I am at a loss to account for this seeming intransigence in scholars. Are they themselves unconscious captives still of the literalism they decry? Most of these scholars are teachers. But they, like the rest of us, fall far short of the genius of the Great Teacher—who could employ the very superstitions of his pupils to carry through their minds down into their hearts his new truths, salvaging the urgency of their dread errors but planting within these the serum of their ultimate cure. Truly, "never man spake like this man!"

I don't mean to be invidious, but can it be that we sophisticates, as we stand before the Great Galilean, have to compensate for our inferiority by hugging to our brains so blessed a relief: this alleged instance of unintelligence in the wisest man of the ages?

Granted the exegetical difficulties involved in the higher view of Jesus' mentality, these are not so insuper-

*Contributions to this department, a regular feature of the magazine, will be welcomed. Unless it is specified otherwise, any communications addressed to the Editors will be considered available for publication. Letters should be brief, and the Editors reserve the right to omit portions without changing the sense. Unsigned letters will not be published, except where anonymity is obviously warranted. Address communications to the Editors, 409 Prospect Street, New Haven 11, Connecticut.*



able as the one enigma that mars the lower view, namely the inconsistency of the eschatological illusion with the otherwise perfect picture, with Jesus' luminous insight into God and the life about him.

Why the one crippling blind spot? Or are we attributing the blind spot to the wrong retina?

Meantime social action itself is embarrassed and frustrated by an unnecessary obstacle dragged along, like a ball and chain, from the obtuseness of Jesus' first interpreters. And so the author of the article in question has to waste his acumen in discrimination between what God does somehow directly and what he does through men, in realizing his Kingdom on earth—a distinction psychologically impossible to sustain.

H. H. Lindeman

Church Extension Division  
Board of Home Missions  
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## "Theology Adrift"

Sirs:

Your selection of Paul Ramsey's "A Theology of Social Action" for publication as the October 15, 1946, issue of *Social Action* should be roundly applauded by "friend and foe". Dr. Douglas Horton calls it "theology unchained". Surely he did not read it; any honest reader, reading it carefully, surely would see that it is "theology adrift".

"Social Christianity" (another name for "Christian Socialism"), writes the author, "very plainly leaves something out of Jesus' viewpoint—namely his primitive eschatology. And equally as plainly, although not as consciously or deliberately, the 'social gospel' adds something to Jesus, something not contained in Jesus' outlook precisely because the eschatology was there. . . .

Programs for contemporary Christian social action, which are rooted chiefly in the social gospel movement, are therefore grounded in very large measure in the fact that thoughtful Christians no longer share Jesus' eschatology."

Theology, my dictionary tells me, "treats of God, his nature, attributes, laws, etc.;" hence when writers admit that they are adding something to the Jesus of the Holy Writ, and likewise subtracting something which very definitely is written there, they may be discussing theology, but it is a pagan, man-made god they are writing about; hence they have left the province of *Christian* theology.

Jesus' eschatology, which the good Doctor Ramsey admits is not present in the theology of "social action", is his prophesies of the future, his "doctrine concerning man's existence after death, the future of nations, and the final condition of the world." (Quoted phrases from *New Standard Encyclopedia*.)

Earlier in his "paper" Dr. Ramsey seeks to limit Jesus' (omitted) eschatology to "Jesus' confident belief that God would soon, suddenly and catastrophically intervene to disrupt the order of life prevailing in this present age and to inaugurate by his own power alone a kingdom of righteousness." But I'm afraid that the "social Gospel" rejects all of Jesus' eschatology, including the prophecy of his own resurrection, the promise of eternal life for believers, and many other things inherent in Christianity. This, of course, is my own opinion; other readers are free to form their own opinions.

Please be good enough to have Dr. Ramsey cite his evidence for his statement that Jesus held "confident belief that God would *soon*, suddenly and catastrophically intervene. . . ." I have not found this in my Bible.

Verne P. Kaub

Madison, Wisconsin

## The Author Answers

Sirs:

I believe I am correct in taking it as fairly well agreed among New Testament scholars that Jesus confidently believed "that God would soon, suddenly, and catastrophically intervene, etc." The fact that Jesus' belief was of this general type is not now seriously doubted, although what sort of apocalyptic expectation he held in detail may still be discussed. . . . The issue is not whether Jesus *could* have risen above this as well as other "errors" of his contemporaries, but whether in fact he *did* "transcend that limitation" or not (Lindeman).

Jesus stressed *gradualness* only with respect to the *proclamation* of the kingdom's coming and the different hold the message would take on the minds of men (Parable of the Sower). If Jesus had wished to emphasize the gradualness of the coming of the kingdom, a process such as the aging of wine over the years rather than the leavening of dough in a few hours, and the development of some seed other than the mustard plant which rushes up to maturity in a single season, would have been the subjects of his parables. What his parables teach is that the kingdom-power is even now secretly operating (cf. E. F. Scott: *The Kingdom of God in the New Testament*, p. 71). "I shall not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come." (Luke 22:18. Cf. Rudolph Otto: *The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man*, p. 265 ff.). No wonder, then, that as Jesus set his face toward Jerusalem his disciples (instructed now in almost all the teachings they ever heard from Jesus' lips) "supposed that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear." (Luke 19:11b).

In no man's language is "social Christianity" simply another name for "Christian Socialism" (Kaub),

unless he contends that "social" and "socialism" are equivalent and that in being anti-socialism he is anti-social. My statement (p. 30) in paraphrase of Paul, "In Christ Jesus, socialism is not valid" was overlooked by Mr. Kaub, whether because it continues, "neither is private property an absolute," or because it ends with the words, "faith active in love," which forever thrusts the Christian into all sorts of social action for his neighbor's sake.

I considered only one aspect of Jesus' eschatology and omitted any reference to his views concerning man's existence after death. (Kaub). I believe there is truth to this doctrine. Yet it is significant that for almost the entire span of Biblical religion beliefs about the future destiny of the individual were set in the context of beliefs about the future destiny of the community. . . . Mr. Kaub, on the contrary, stresses eternal life for the believer in order to jettison Christian concern for the reign of God's love in the social order. With the same interest in defending the faith of *their* fathers and pulling the nerve of revolutionary impulse which Mr. Kaub still finds in the kingdom-idea, the conservatives of Jesus' day, the Sadducees, thought it necessary to reject not only the prevailing interpretation of the kingdom but also the doctrine of resurrection associated with it.

While not agreeing with Mr. Swan that Jesus' eschatology is a matter of certain "passages", it should be clear that I also affirm that "the mind of Christ" in us cannot do otherwise than lead to social action.

Theology unchained or theology adrift, at least theology must move, and move into life—which is more than can be said for the faith of our fathers, except as our *fathers* possessed it.

Paul Ramsey

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## Social Scene

*"Everything is a thought first." A New World must begin in a New Mind. And if we are to have One World we must have One Mind. Not uniformity of ideas or identity of ideologies; nothing could more stultify the condition of man. But we must have unanimity of purpose, if we are to have One World. And we will have One World, or no world worth living in.*

*To implement this united intention, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) must race against time. It might bridge the seas with exchange scholarships. It must cross the last frontiers and part the iron curtains, both ways. It must equip a world-wide generation with an understanding of all countries and an appreciation of every culture. Here is a Cosmopolitan Project that should put the Manhattan Project in the shade. Match the \$2,000,000,000 that project in destruction is said to have cost, and we could provide \$1,000 annual scholarships to 2,000,000 youth.*

*We just might create a New Mind for a New Age, if we can have a change of heart. Education must be of the emotions and the appreciations as well as of the intellect. "The heart bath reasons that the reason knoweth not of." Harness the heart of the world to the hope of the world—*

*"That mind and soul, according well,  
May make one music as before."*

*Alfred W Swan*

### Recent Church Statement on Soviet-American Relations

The International Relations Committee of the Council for Social Action highly recommends the statement on Soviet-American Relations submitted by the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace and adopted by the Executive Committee of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, October 11, 1946.

We urge your study of the statement in full, which may be obtained for 5c. from the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York City 10.